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ABSTRACT

This paper explains some of the policies, procedures, and standards now in effect as a result of educational reform efforts within the State of South Carolina. Approval of a teacher education program is based on a comprehensive evaluation incorporating the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). An explanation of the evaluation process is presented. Three instruments implemented to improve overall quality of education in South Carolina are: the Assessments of Performance in Teaching, the South Carolina Education Entrance Examination (EEE), and the National Teacher Examination. A description of the use of these instruments and the purpose of each are discussed in some detail. A brief description of the basic areas assessed by the EEE (which covers writing, reading, and mathematics) is included. A list is provided of minimum required scores on the appropriate teaching area examination. A discussion is presented on the lessons learned from teacher education reform in South Carolina. (JD)

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Reform Policies, Procedures and Standards for the Approval of Teacher Education Programs in South Carolina

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South Carolina has been on the leading edge of the current educational reform movement throughout the country namely, because of the great needs existing in the state. At some levels the state has become a closely examined model and has been lauded and commended by national agencies and individuals for attempts to reform and upgrade the educational system.

This paper attempts to explain some of the policies, procedures and standards now in effect as a result of reform efforts within the state.

Revised Standards:

The Education Improvement Act, passed by the South Carolina Legislature in 1984 required that "...Beginning in 1984-85, additional and upgraded approval standards must be developed, in consultation with the Commission of Higher Education, and promulgated by the State Board of Education for these teacher education programs."

In February, 1985, the State Board of Education appointed a committee composed of representatives from public and private institutions of higher education, public school districts, the Commission on Higher Education, education organizations and the legislature to assist the Board in carrying out legislation for the improvement of teacher program approval standards. The proposed standards were adopted by the State Board of Education in January, 1986.

Any program of study in professional education offered in South Carolina by any institution of higher education must be approved by the State Board of Education if the program is to be used for the purpose of initial certification in South Carolina. An institution recommends for certification only those individuals who complete a state-approved teacher education program. For this purpose, the State Board of Education uses the Standards for State Approval of Teacher Education published by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), suitably modified or extended by the Board.

In addition, an essential part of the state system of program approval now consists of outcome indicators which measure the effectiveness of both the general and the specific components of the teacher education program through products. These indicators are as follows:

a. Proportion of students attaining the passing score on the professional knowledge examination (pedagogy)
b. Proportion of students attaining the passing score on the teaching area examination (NTE or SCTAE)
c. Proportion of students who achieve the state standard on the performance assessment during the provisional contract year
d. Proportion of students qualified for certification in South Carolina

The approval status of the teacher education program is based on a comprehensive evaluation incorporating the NASDTEC process standards as defined by evidence indicators and the outcome indicators which measure products of the program.

An explanation of the evaluation process follows:

A. Self Study

The Director of the Office of Teacher Education and Certification of the South Carolina State Department of Education will notify each institution of program evaluation one year in advance. The institution will complete the

self-analysis of all certification programs for which approval is requested and will forward copies to the State Supervisor of Teacher Education. Copies of the self-analysis and supportive materials are mailed by the institution to the individual members of the evaluation team.

B. The Evaluation Team

Members of the evaluation team are appointed by the Office of Teacher Education and Certification and trained in the skills and policies of on-site evaluation. The number of persons serving on an evaluation team are based on the size and scope of the programs submitted. The institution has the right to request the substitution of appointed members and the chairman of the team for reasons submitted in writing. All team members receive training within two years prior to service. Evaluation teams should reflect a balanced composition of classroom teachers, administrators, and higher education personnel.

C. The On-site Visit

On the selected dates, the evaluation team convenes on the campus of the institution and remains for the period of time adequate to study the program and facilities. The team's responsibilities include verification and, where necessary, clarification or elaboration of information, evidence, documentation, and data pertinent to the evaluation. It is the primary duty of the visiting team to undertake an objective analysis of the teacher education program and to develop and file a factual report supported by evidence of its findings. The factual report of the team's findings is reviewed at a scheduled exit interview at the conclusion of the visit. Within thirty days after the visit, the Office of Teacher Education and Certification submits the institution a detailed report of the team's evaluation.

D. The Institution's Response

The institution, within thirty days, submits a written response. This response may (a) agree with the report, (b) cite any portions of the report that are factually in error and include supporting documentation, (c) clarify any portions of the report on which there is a disagreement or difference of interpretation or opinion, along with supporting documentation submitted as supplementary material, or (d) present minor changes made after the on-site visit for consideration.

E. The Professional Review Committee

Materials are then submitted to a Professional Review Committee which consists of twelve members appointed by the State Board of Education. The committee considers all information pertinent to the institution's application and prepares recommendations for use by the State Board of Education. Recommendations by the Professional Review Committee to the State Board of Education are limited to four categories:

a. Approval
b. Approval with advisement
c. Probational approval
d. Disapproval

F. Withdrawal of Program

Institutions with one or more programs recommended for the categories of (1) Approval with advisement, (2) Probational approval, or (3) Disapproval, may request that the programs be withdrawn from consideration prior to submission to the State Board of Education. Any program withdrawn at the request

of the institution is ineligible to offer course credits for purposes of certification effective June 30 of the year in which the request is made and is ineligible to submit a request for re-approval for one year from the date of expiration.

G. Approval by the State Board of Education

The State Board of Education must restrict program approval to the following four categories and their respective conditions, which may apply to the entire teacher education program at an institution or to the individual certification programs in it:

(a) Approval
(b) Approval with advisement
(c) Probational approval
(d) Disapproval

H. Notification of Approval

Institutions seeking approval of their programs are notified by the State Superintendent of Education regarding the action taken by the State Board of Education. Complete files of all information are maintained in the Office of Teacher Education and Certification.

I. Institutional Appeal

An institution has the right to file a notice of appeal within thirty days after a decision is made by the State Board of Education.

Devised Instruments:

Three instruments, implemented as a result of Act 187 of 1979 to improve overall quality of education in South Carolina, are the Assessments of Performance in Teaching, the South Carolina Education Entrance Examination, and the National Teacher Examination. A description of the use of these instruments and the purpose of each are discussed below in some detail.

Assessments of Performance in Teaching:

In 1979, the South Carolina Legislature passed Act 187, providing for a "fair and comprehensive program for the training, certification, initial employment and evaluation of public educators in the state." One provision of the act was the establishment of the Educator Improvement Task Force with a mandate to develop a teaching evaluation instrument. The instrument, designed to measure only minimal competencies of all student teachers, provisional (first year teachers), and trades and industries (T and I) annual contract teachers, was entitled the Assessments of Performance in Teaching (APT).

A nationwide survey of more than fifty (50) teacher-training institutions and twenty thousand teachers in South Carolina was conducted to determine the characteristics requisite for successful teaching. The most-often mentioned qualities were compiled and the resulting list included fifty-one teaching competencies. The instrument was divided into five major Performance Dimensions (PD). Each dimension is measured by observation statements, ranging in number from eight to eleven. Each statement is a diachotomous "yes/no" decision which indicates whether or not the teaching skill has been demonstrated during the observation. A passing score of forty-four (44) on the fifty-one (51) point instrument is required of provisional teachers. The same instrument is used to measure student teachers alike and first year teachers since the skills and behaviors for minimal competence of both are identical.

Beginning teachers who cannot successfully complete the instrument on the second attempt are no longer employable by the system. Student teachers who are not successful on the first attempt are remediated in deficient areas by the college supervisor.

Procedures for completing the APT are listed as follows:

1. The process begins with an in-depth orientation to the instrument.
2. Three observations are scheduled following the orientation. The times for the evaluation are scheduled by the teacher and the supervisor well in advance of the observation. A two-week time period is allowed to complete the three observations.
3. Three different lesson plans must be prepared by the teacher as model or "showcase" demonstrations.
4. Observational ratings are prepared during or immediately after the observation period. Self-observations are also conducted by the trainee in order to compare notes with the observer at the follow-up conference.
5. The follow-up conference must take place within one week of the last observation and includes the major observer and, when possible, the two other observers. Strengths and weaknesses are identified on the Conference Sheet and remediation proposed where necessary.

Observers in the APT program receive extensive training for reliability before they can participate in the observation process. They must have had successful teaching experience in order to bring to the observation a level of expertise to make professional judgments. It is important to the evaluative process that only actual observed demonstrations be recorded. The recommended team of observers for the provisional teacher is district office administrator, the principal, and an experienced, trained classroom teacher. For the student teacher, the college supervisor, principal, and the classroom supervisor are recommended. In the Fall of 1988 all supervisors of student teachers must have completed reliability training in the use of the APT.

In its initial stages, the APT did not discriminate in some colleges and universities in the state. It has undergone several revisions since its inception in 1979 in attempts to make it more discriminating and more reliable. In fact, a part of the development of the instrument included provisions for constant up-date and revision processes.

Today, though the instrument is more discriminating in the state as a whole, the ratio of success for provisional contract teachers from Clemson University is 100%. The state rate for successful completion of the instrument is approximately 96 per cent.

Many school systems are using adaptations of the instrument to evaluate permanent teachers. The adaptations are adjusted so that evaluation measures total teaching competencies rather than minimal competencies only and are subject to approval by the state board.

Some of the positive comments regarding the use of the instrument are as follows:

1. It defines minimal skills for all teachers.
2. It improves observational skills of supervisors.
3. It is an asset in the planning of instruction.
4. It is a reliable measure of competencies.

Negative comments:

1. It measures only minimal competencies.
2. Student teachers feel that successful completion of the APT is a measure of good teaching.

3. It has threatening aspects in terms of failure.
4. It is too mechanical and structured.

Education Entrance Examination:

A second instrument developed to improve the quality of education in South Carolina is the Education Entrance Examination or the triple EEE as it is now commonly known. Act 187 intended that all prospective teachers have basic reading, writing and mathematics skills. The act was amended in 1981 to include T and I teachers who seek continuing contracts in the state.

All undergraduate college and university students seeking admission to a teacher education program must take the examination before or upon the completion of sixty (60) semester hours of undergraduate study. Examinees must take and pass all three sections of the examination. Only those portions, however, which were not successfully completed have to be retaken. Candidates may take the EEE no more than three times. A student who has not passed all sections of the examination may be admitted to a teacher education program for no more than one year. If the student has not completed all sections of the examination satisfactorily at the end of that year, he or she will not be allowed to continue in the teacher education program.

Three areas of basic knowledge are assessed by the EEE: writing, reading, and mathematics. A brief description of each is included below:

Writing

a. develops and supports an assigned topic
b. forms sentences, word usage, spells, capitalizes and punctuates

Reading

Contextual Word Meaning

a. determines appropriate meaning of familiar words
b. uses context clues to determine meaning of unfamiliar words

Literal Comprehension

a. identifies main idea
b. identifies details
c. identifies correct sequence

Inferential Comprehension

a. identifies implied main idea
b. identifies implied relationships
c. draws logical conclusions
d. predicts outcomes
e. distinguishes fact from opinion
f. recognizes manipulative

Reference Usage

a. selects appropriate reference sources
b. locates information
c. interprets information

Mathematics

Arithmetic Concepts and Operations

a. orders integers, fractions and decimals
b. matches names of numbers with whole number or decimal form
c. rounds whole numbers and decimals
d. applies associative, commutative, distributive (identifies properties)
e. estimates sums, differences, products quotients, and square roots
f. determines squares and cubes of whole numbers and identifies square roots of whole numbers that are perfect squares
g. substitutes into algebraic expressions
h. performs computations using integers, fractions, decimals and percents
i. identifies equivalent fractions, decimals, ratios, and percents.

Measurement

a. identifies properties of plane geometric figures
b. identifies common plane and solid geometric figures
c. identifies parallel and perpendicular lines
d. identifies similar and congruent polygons
e. determines/compares the perimeter, area and volume

Problem Solving

a. recognizes a sensible answer or estimates an answer to a problem
b. identifies superflous or needed information for a solution or recognizes that information is insufficient
c. translates verbal into symbolic expressions
d. selects a correct formula or procedure needed to solve a problem
e. interprets symbolic expressions
f. solves arithmetic measurement, and geometry problems with emphasis on real-life contexts.

At first the EEE did not discriminate among students in certain colleges in the state. The test was revised again when it discriminated too keenly. It, like the APT, undergoes constant evaluation and revision.

The percent of students in the state successfully completing the examination in 1985-86 was 67%. At Clemson University 94 per cent of the students taking the test in 1985-86 achieved passing scores. Most of the failures occur in the math area.

Some educators will take issue with the highly structured, mechanical reform approach to improving the overall quality of education in South Carolina. However, it is working in at least one respect. Test scores in every area tested at all levels have improved significantly since 1981. South Carolina has received wide recognition nationally in the past two years as a "model for improving education" -- and for its wide-sweeping attempts to up-grade and reform education in the state.

National Teacher Examination (NTE):

In addition to the successful EEE and APT requirements, an individual applying for teacher certification must present the minimum required score on the appropriate teaching area examination as established by the South Carolina State Board of Education.

A score on the Teaching Area Examination of the National Teacher Examinations is required for certification in those areas for which an appropriate teaching area examination exists and has been validated for use in South Carolina. Minimum required scores on the appropriate Teaching Area Examinations are as follows:

Area of Certification	Teaching Area Examination	Required Score
Accounting and Related Business Administration	Business Education	540
Elementary School Principal and Supervisor	Educational Administration and Supervision	590
Secondary School Principal and Supervisor	Educational Administration and Supervision	590
School Superintendent	Educational Administration and Supervision	590
Advanced Fine Arts		
Art	Art Education	500
Music	Music Education	400
Agriculture	Agriculture	390
Agricultural Mechanics	Agriculture	390
Animal Science	Agriculture	390
Art	Art Education	500
Biology	Biology and General Science	590
Chemistry	Chemistry, Physis and General Science	
Early Childhood Education	Early Childhood Education	520
Educable Mentally Handicapped	Education of the Mentally Retarded	590
Ecomonics	Social Studies	550
Elementary Education	Education in the Elementary School	540
English	English, Language and Literature	500
Environmental Science	Agriculture	390
Forestry	Agriculture	390
French	French	610
General Science	Biology and General Science or Chemistry, Physics and General Science	590 570
Geography	Social Studies	550
Government	Social Studies	550
Guidance		
Elementary Guidance	Guidance Counselor	550
Associate Guidance	Guidance Counselor	550
Secondary Guidance	Guidance Counselor	550
Advanced Guidance Secondary	Guidance Counselor	550

Area of Certification	Teaching Area Examination	Required Score
History	Social Studies	550
Home Economics	Home Economics	540
Horticulture	Agriculture	390
Industrial Arts	Industrial Arts Education	570
Language Arts-Middle School	English, Language, and Literature	500
Mathematics (Including Middle School)	Mathematics	560
Media Communication Specialist	Media Specialist, Library and Audio-Visual Services	590
Media Specialist/Library Science	Media Specialist, Library and Audio-Visual Services	640
Music Education-Choral	Music Education	480
Music Education-Instrumental	Music Education	480
Music Education-Piano	Music Education	480
Music Education-Violin	Music Education	480
Music Education-Voice	Music Education	480
Office Occupations	Business Education	540
Physical Education	Physical Education	590
Physics	Chemistry, Physics and General Science	570
Reading Reading Teacher	Introduction to the Teaching of Reading	500
Reading Consultant	Introduction to the Teaching of Reading	500
Reading Coordinator or Director	Introduction to the Teaching of Reading	500
Reading Clinician	Introduction to the Teaching of Reading	500
Science (Including Middle School)	Biology and General Science	590
	or	
	Chemistry, Physics and General Science	570
Secretarial Science	Business Education	540
Social Studies (Including Middle School)	Social Studies	550
Sociology	Social Studies	550
Spanish	Spanish	590
Speech Correctionist	Speech-Language Pathology	510
Trainable Mentally Handicapped	Education of the Mentally Retarded	590

South Carolina Teaching Area Examinations

The following South Carolina Teaching Area Examinations and minimum scores will be required for certification as indicated. These are areas where an area teaching examination of the NTE is not available. These were developed by the State of South Carolina.

Area of Certification	Teaching Area Examination	Required Score
Latin	Latin	70
German	German	100
Earth Science	Earth Science	83
Psychology	Psychology	60
Distributive Education	Marketing and Distributive Education	68
Speech and Drama	Speech and Drama	*
Health	Health Education	87
Learning Disabilities	Special Education-Learning Disabled	63
Emotionally Handicapped	Special Education-Emotionally Handicapped	70
Orthopedically Handicapped	Special Educationp Orthopedically Handicapped	64
Hearing Handicapped	Special Education-Hearing Handicapped	66
Visually Handicapped	Special Education-Visually Handicapped	68
Trades and Industries (29 specific fields)	Trades and Industries	*

*Test not available. Persons meeting all other requirements for certification will be issued conditional certification until such time as tests are available.

Certification examinations for the areas of Attendance Supervisor, School Social Worker I, II, III, and School Psychologist I, II, III are unavailable at this time. Persons seeking certification who meet all requirements for certification in effect on the date of receipt of all required documentation other than the certification test score shall qualify for a Conditional Certificate valid for one year. This Conditional Certificate shall be renewable annually upon written request from the teacher until the State Board of Education adopt an examination which has been validated for certification purposes with minimum qualifying scores. Upon adoption by the State Board of Education of the validated examinations and minimum qualifying score, teachers holding the conditional Certificate will be required to take the designated area examinations and present the required score to be issued a Professional Certificate.

Table I shows NTE results of active Clemson University education majors who normally take the test during the senior year.

NTE Summary, Fall, 1986

TEST	NO. TAKING	NO. PASSING	Per Cent Passing
Ed. Elementary School	24	22	92
Early Child Ed	9	9	100
Mathematics (High School)	20	13	65
Math - General	20	20	100
Social Studies	12	7	58
English	12	9	75
Biology	6	5	83

TABLE I

LESSONS LEARNED FROM TEACHER EDUCATION REFORM

It is too soon to assess the long-term effects of the teacher education reform movement in South Carolina. However, analysis of the reform process itself can provide valuable lessons both for future efforts in South Carolina and for those in other states who anticipate following a similar path.

The South Carolina experience has taught us at least three important lessons.

Lesson Number One: When developing standards, avoid overkill. South Carolina originally began with a set of rather vague process standards, attempted to operationalize them by adding evidence indicators, and now has added a layer of product standards. Obviously, the goal is more effective accountability through greater objectivity, but where do we stop? How many ways must a program be evaluated before it is deemed acceptable. There may be a point of diminishing returns in a reform movement when the evaluation process becomes so burdensome that it is a hindrance rather than a benefit. There is a point when record keeping and evidence accumulation, rather than being natural outgrowths of the program, become the primary objective of the evaluation process. The relevant question is: Does meeting a reform standard improve the program proportionately to the effort necessary to maintain the process? Furthermore, there is the important question of how relevant the standards are to the primary purpose of teacher education institutions, that is, producing qualified graduates who can get certified and become successful educators. If the reform movement in teacher education is to be successful, then the evaluation process must become a manageable on-going part of the instructional program and be related to the primary mission of the institution.

Lesson Number Two: When developing standards, be clear and precise. Vague and ambiguous standards produce uncertainty in interpretation and inconsistency in evaluation. How can we insure clarity and precision in standard development?

First, avoid standards written by a committee. Although it is absolutely necessary to get input from people with diverse backgrounds and interests in developing the general framework of standards, it is not engraved in stone that the committee must write the standards. A committee is good for insuring the substantive content of standards, but a professional writer should be employed to draft standards that are consistent in style and grammar.

Second, avoid haste in developing standards. Sometimes, deadlines are politically-motivated and do not provide ample time for calm deliberation. Furthermore, a draft of standards should be submitted to all teacher education institutions with ample time for their review and recommendations.

Third, avoid standards that are written to satisfy special interests. While it is necessary to have some flexibility in a standard that may apply to diverse institutional settings, when a disagreement arises over the conclusion of a standard, the decision should be made on the basis of empirically-validated research evidence or educationally-sound principles rather than special interests or political power. Compromises and trade-offs in the name of fairness and harmony often produce an array of conflicting and unsound standards.

Fourth, avoid creativity when writing standards. Simple language and redundancy in the use of terminology are best. A word or term with a specific meaning should be used consistently throughout all standards. Synonyms should be avoided. For example, the following terms are used in the South Carolina standards, sometimes synonymously and sometimes not: teacher education program, teacher education programs, teacher education major, teacher education specilization, teacher education. How is one to know exactly what the standard writers intended?

Fifth, avoid flexibility in interpretation when a specific outcome is expected. For example, one standard reads, "At least fifty percent of the total faculty in professional education will hold the terminal degree." Few people will have trouble with "fifty percent" but who is to determine which faculty will count in the area of "professional education"? And what is the "terminal" degree? There is some disagreement about whether or not this means a doctorate, especially for secondary academic areas.

The quality of the evaluation process is directly related to the degree to which teacher educators can accurately interpret both the letter and the spirit of evaluation standards. Much foresight is necessary on the part of standard developers if their intentions are to be manifested in evaluation outcomes.

Lesson Number Three: Avoid authoritative approval of standards without consideration of the consequences. For example, when a new round of standards was approved in South Carolina in 1984, the State Board of Education developed three options for classifying programs for approval based upon on-site evaluations. A program could be approved for five years, three years, or not at all. When several schools' evaluations left them in this latter category, the State Board of Education arbitrarily created a probationary category and gave the effected schools an additional year to meet deficiencies. The new standards have a one-year probationary category.

Whether or not the State Board of Education should have given the schools with deficient programs another chance is not as important an issue as the Board's short-sightedness of adopting standards without considering the possible outcomes. The after-the-fact decision appeared to be politically motivated and self-serving. It reflected on the credibility of the Board and presented to the public a lack of courage in the application of rules and regulations. While it is probably not possible to avoid every mistake in judgment where such a complicated process as evaluation of teacher education institutions is concerned, one must justifiably expect that the State Board of Education would determine such important contingencies before institutions are evaluated, not after.

In conclusion, South Carolina's attempts to reform teacher education have led us to ask: How can institutions be helped to evaluate their programs in a meaningful way so as to improve them, thus providing a more effective avenue for prospective educators to do a better job in schools? The answer calls for a minimum of relevant, cost-effective evaluation standards clearly and unambiguously stated and fairly and consistently administered.

Appendix
Figure I

PD 1: PLANNING

Name: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

Grade: _____

Subject: _____ No. _____

a. outcomes stated	a.
b. objectives compatible	b.
c. procedures stated	c.
d. students involved	d.
e. materials stated	e.
f. differences planned	f.
g. objectives assessed	g.
h. progress recorded	h.

Figure II

PD 2: INSTRUCTION

a. began promptly	a.
b. objectives addressed	b.
c. needs accommodated	c.
d. interest stimulated	d.
e. approaches varied	e.
f. size varied	f.
g. active opportunities	g.
h. application opportunities	h.
i. information obtained	i.
j. progress provided	j.
k. physical arrangement	k.

Figure III

PD 3: MANAGEMENT

a. behavior established	a.
b. firm enforcement	b.
c. procedural confidence	c.
d. instruction continued	d.
e. disruptions addressed	e.
f. codes enforced	f.
g. inattentive involved	g.
h. special assistance	h.
i. strategies adjusted	i.
j. patient, poised	j.
k. fair, impartial	k.

Figure IV

PD 4: COMMUNICATION

a. instructional plan	a.
b. logical sequence	b.
c. understandable level	c.
d. explanations restated	d.
e. illustrations demonstrated	e.
f. knowledgeable authority	f.
g. information accurate	g.
h. legible writing	h.
i. written communication	i.
j. oral communication	j.
k. speech quality	k.

Figure V

PD 5: ATTITUDE

a. courtesy modeled	a.
b. positive reinforcement	b.
c. expression encouraged	c.
d. learning personalized	d.
e. supportive corrections	e.
f. reasons given	f.
g. value communicated	g.
h. enthusiasm communicated	h.
i. open-mindedness	i.
j. humor acknowledged	j.

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